

Gaston County Schools
Board of Education
Monday, May 15, 2023
Meeting 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. The meeting was live on Spectrum Cable Channel 21 and The Gaston County Board of Education YouTube page. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Jeff Ramsey, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Josh Crisp, Lee Dedmon, Dot Guthrie, Tod Kinlaw, Robbie Lovelace, Brent Moore (via phone), and A.M. Stephens III (arrived after meeting in progress).

Additional attendees include: Superintendent Dr. W. Jeffrey Booker, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Melissa Balknight and Gary Hoskins, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Chief Technology Officer Aaron Slutsky and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

Superintendent Booker led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Superintendent Booker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Adoption - Action

The Board considered Agenda Adoption – Action

Motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Dot Cherry; motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

Good News – Information

Superintendent Booker asked everyone to pause for a moment and remember Mr. James Montgomery, Principal of Highland School of Technology, as he is going through some health issues at this time.

Superintendent Booker recognized Maddie Boyles, graphic teacher at Highland School of Technology and Darryl Thompson the Graphics Academy Coordinator. For the second year in a row, Mrs. Boyles and her class were tasked with creating a tifo for the Charlotte FC major league soccer team. A tifo is a large visual display held up by fans in the stands before the game begins. This year, Mrs. Boyles, with the help of her classes, designed a tifo for the game against New York City on May 6, 2023.

Mr. Josh Crisp presented a recognition plaque to Mrs. Boyles.

Superintendent Booker recognized Navy JROTC Instructor Sergeant Major Rodney Robinson and Navy JROTC students at South Point High School - Jacob Barnes, Brooklynn Georgion, Jonathan Ross, Cooper Berckman and Ava Lim. This summer the students will attend a six-day Leadership Academy program at The Citadel in Charleston. The program encompasses courses on leadership, ethics and scenario-based decision-making, enabling the cadets to develop their skills in these areas.

Mr. Tod Kinlaw presented a recognition certificate to all students.

Superintendent Booker recognized students from Pleasant Ridge Elementary who achieved outstanding success at both the Western Region Math Fair and the North Carolina Math Fair. Teachers Emily Kiser and Caletra Miller from Pleasant Ridge Elementary School whose classrooms placed first and second respectively in the K-2 division at the state competition, which is sponsored by the North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Representing Ms. Kiser's class are Princeton Johnson, Charles Murray and Zachary Throckmorton and representing Ms. Miller's class are Cora Detter, Luka Forstinger, Valerie Giler, Carl Moore and Cecilia O'Connell.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to all students.

For the individual awards, kindergarten student Esmeralda Miller placed second in the state competition.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to Esmeralda.

For the individual awards, second grader Oliver Baird received an honorable mention.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to Oliver.

In the state competition, Lara Forstinger placed first in the grades 5-6 division.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to Lara.

In the state competition, Jericho Martin received an honorable mention in the grades 3-4 division.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to Jericho.

Superintendent Booker recognized the students who received recognition in the Western Regional Math Fair. In the grades 5-6 division, Walter Throneburg placed first, followed by Lara Forstinger, who placed second, and Lawrence Martin, who placed third.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to all students.

Superintendent Booker recognized Jericho Martin, who placed second in the grades 3-4 division, Esmeralda Miller placed first in the K-2 division, followed by second graders Oliver Baird, who placed second, and Manha Fatima, who placed third.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition certificate to all students.

Superintendent Booker recognized principal Meghan LeFevers and Media Specialist Paige Henley from Tryon Elementary School. Tryon Elementary is the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries. The school was chosen as one of only 300 schools from across the United States to receive the grant this year. The money will be used to update the non-fiction and Spanish language section of the school's library.

Mrs. Robbie Lovelace presented a recognition plaque to Tryon Elementary School.

Superintendent Booker recognized teachers who successfully finished the Superintendent's Leadership Academy. Through our Superintendent's Leadership Academy, these educators dedicated themselves to a comprehensive 20-month program, completing 36 credit hours and earning a master's degree in school administration. Gaston County Schools partnered with Gardner-Webb University to offer this professional development opportunity that is designed to identify teachers who have an interest in becoming school leaders and give them the means necessary to take the next step in their professional work.

Public Expression – Information

Becky Gaither
1001 Southfork Village Drive
Apt. 107
Belmont, NC 28012
RE: Retire the Red Raider Mascot

Chairman Ramsey reported that the Board held a Work Session on Monday, May 1, 2023 which included discussion of the many projects on the agenda in anticipation for the end of the school year and in preparation of work to be performed over the summer. A few items are still out for bid and Chairman Ramsey asked the Board to authorize the Superintendent and Board Chairman to enter into contracts so work can begin as soon as possible. This action will be ratified by the Board at a future meeting.

Motion

A Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III that the Board
Authorize the Superintendent and Board Chairman to enter into contracts so summer work can begin as soon as possible

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Approval/Correction of Minutes

The Board considered Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of April 17, 2023 as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mrs. Dot Guthrie; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Alternative School's Modified Accountability — Warlick Academy - Action

Chairman Ramey recognized Dr. Rebekka Powers who presented a PowerPoint on Alternative School's Modified Accountability System.

(View PowerPoint)

Motion

A Motion was made by Mr. Josh Crisp; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
Approve Alternative School's Modified Accountability — Warlick Academy

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Alternative School's Modified Accountability — Webb Street School - Action

Chairman Ramey recognized Dr. Rebekka Powers who presented a PowerPoint on Alternative School's Modified Accountability System.

(View PowerPoint)

Motion

A Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace that the Board
Approve Alternative School's Modified Accountability — Webb Street School

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Superintendent Selection Process, North Carolina School Boards Association - Action

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Sam Thorp, NCSBA - Assistant Legal Counsel for Superintendent Searches who presented a PowerPoint on the Superintendent Search Process.

(View PowerPoint)

Consent Agenda – Action

Mr. Josh Crisp requested that Driver Education be pulled from the Consent Agenda.

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Gaston College Board of Trustees Appointment
- E. Bessemer City Stinger Park Joint Driveway and Water/Sewer Line Easement
- F. Exceptional Children's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Grant
- G. Contracts
 - Academic Services
 - ~~Driver Education~~ (pulled from Consent Agenda)
 - Cleaning/Moving Services for Camp Gaston Sites
 - Agency Contracts
 - AMN
 - Angels of Care
 - Bayada
 - BrightStar
 - Continuum
 - EDU
 - Gifted Health
 - Invo Health
 - Maxim Nursing
 - Maxim Health Staffing
 - MGA
 - Positive Behavior Support Corp
 - Quantum
 - Speech Center
 - Stepping Stones

- K-5 English Language Arts Resource
- 6-8 English Language Arts Resource
- 9-12 English Language Arts Resource
- Academic Services Resources and Contract Services
 - Docusign
 - Ellevation
 - First Educational Resource
 - HMH
 - Holy Angels – Community Residential Funds
 - Invision
 - Melmark
 - National Paideia Institute
 - Naviance
 - NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - N2Y
 - Public Consulting Group
 - Riverside
 - SAVVAS
 - Support Inc.
 - Winthrop
 - Waterford – Sole Source

Operations

- All Locations – Solid Waste Removal
- All Locations – Elevator Preventative Maintenance and Inspections
- North Gaston High School – Pavement Project
- Southwest Middle School – Pavement Project
- Kiser Elementary School – Pavement Project
- South Point High School – Pavement Project
- Carpet/VCT Replacement Project/Furniture Movement/Abatement
- Fire Escape Stairs at Central Office – Life Safety
- East Gaston High School – Boiler/Chiller Replacement
- Contract Revision – Floyd Foster Transport
- Contract Revision – Conexion Mobility
- Contract Revision – American Alternative Transportation
- Bessemer City Primary School – Life Safety
- Bessemer City Central School – Life Safety
- W.B. Beam Intermediate School – Life Safety
- Hunter Huss High School – LED Lighting

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda with Driver Education item pulled was made by Mr. Josh Crisp; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion to adopt the Driver Education item from the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry motion carried. (8-1) (Mr. Josh Crisp voted against)

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Booker announced that the Gaston Early College High School graduation ceremony for the Class of 2023 will be held Thursday evening, May 18, 2023 at the Gaston Early College High School.

Our next graduation ceremonies are on Wednesday, May 24, 2023 for the Gaston County Virtual Academy, Warlick Academy, and Webb Street School. The ceremonies for our 10 traditional high schools are Friday, May 26, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Superintendent Booker announced end-of-year testing continues for our elementary schools and middle schools, and our high school exams begin on Thursday, May 18, 2023.

Superintendent Booker reminded everyone of upcoming events — our Career Signing Day Ceremony and the New Teacher of the Year and Teacher Assistant of the Year Reception, both of which are on Tuesday, May 23, 2023.

Superintendent Booker congratulated the winners of the Evening of Excellence ceremony. This event recognizes our outstanding educators and announces our “Of the Year” winners for 2023-2024.

Our Teacher of the Year, Melissa Clements from Belmont Middle School; our Principal of the Year, Justin Beam from North Belmont Elementary; our Assistant Principal of the Year, Dr. Josh Bromley from Forestview High School; and our Central Office Administrator of the Year, Curtis Poplin from Technology Support Services. We would like to express our appreciation to Truist Bank for sponsoring our Evening of Excellence Ceremony again this year and making it a special event for us. Additionally, we want to say “thank you” to Courage Kia for presenting a vehicle lease agreement for a brand new Kia Seltos to our Teacher of the Year and for presenting a \$100 service certificate to all honorees who were recognized during the Evening of Excellence program.

Superintendent Booker thanked all employees for their hard work to give us a strong finish to the 2023-2024 school year. It is hard to believe that the last day of school is Wednesday, May 24, 2023.

Superintendent Booker reminded everyone that Memorial Day is Monday, May 29, 2023 and our schools and central office buildings will be closed as it is a holiday for all employees.

Chairman Ramsey announced that our next Board Meeting will be held on Monday, June 12, 2023.

Closed Session

Chairman Ramsey asked the Board to consider going into Closed Session under, N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel and N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney.

Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Josh Crisp; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 6:55 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:02 p.m.

Motion

The Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
Approve teacher contract reports for the upcoming school year for Residency/Emergency/PTT contract renewal, one year contract renewal, two year contract renewal and four year contract renewal for teachers as presented.

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board
Award a two-year Assistant Principal contract renewal effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025 for the following:

Joe Burns

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace that the Board
Award a four-year Assistant Principal contract renewal effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2027 for the following:

Antina Avery
Jennifer Bergerson
Chelsea Elmore
Carlene Falter
Heather Hutchens Rice
Sierra Jennings
Jennifer Lancaster
Amber Lawson
Shanika Mack
Takasha Morrow
James Tom Potter
Timothy Reed
Lauren Rohrer
Sharron Courtney Williams
William Winston

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
Award a four-year Principal contract renewal effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2027 for the following:

Jacob Barr
Beverly Bowman
Miranda Buchanon
Jenny Cabe
Laura Clark
Kristie Gornto
Donna Kelly
Kristen Kiser

Adair McKay
James Montgomery
Emily Poag
Lynne Stamey
Lynn Whiteside
Page Willis

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; seconded by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace that the Board
Award a four-year contract renewal effective July 1, 2023 June 30, 2027 for the following:

Chris Bennett
Jill Payne

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Josh Crisp; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board
Award a two-year Assistant Principal contract effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025 for the following:

Savanna Abernathy
Laura Benson
Robert Egnot
Tiffany Gardner
Carole Hamblin
Daphne Jordan
April McGee
Angie Molla
Wanda Reid
Molly Tessnear
Dustin Weaver
Marcia White

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace that the Board
Award a two-year Principal contract effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025 for the following:

Garey Coke

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Superintendent Booker announced that there is a vacancy at W.C. Friday Middle School. Page Willis, current Principal at Lingerfeldt Elementary, will be named as the Principal of W.C. Friday Middle for the

2023-2024 school year and Mr. Garey Coke will serve as the Principal of Lingerfeldt Elementary for the 2023-2024 school year.

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Josh Crisp; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
Enter into a contract with the North Carolina School Boards Association (NCSBA) for our Superintendent Search

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (8-0)
(Ms. Dot Cherry recused herself from the vote as she is on the Board of Directors for NCSBA).

Chairman Ramsey summarized our superintendent search process. On Monday, April 17, 2023 Superintendent Booker announced his resignation from Gaston County Schools at the end of the school year. The Board of Education approved to hire the NCSBA to assist in the search and hiring process of a new superintendent. Until a new superintendent is named, we will need an interim to fill the role of the superintendent.

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board
Enter into a contract with Dr. Stephen Laws as our interim superintendent beginning July 1, 2023

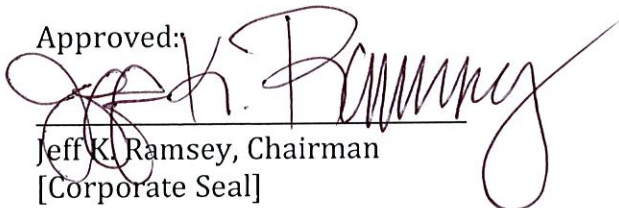
A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Adjournment

All business having been conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Tod Kinlaw motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Approved:


Jeff K. Ramsey, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]


W. Jeffrey Booker, Secretary

Date Approved: 6-12-23

Alternative School's Modified Accountability System





Option B:

- ◆ 20% Academic Persistence
- ◆ 20% Achievement
- ◆ 60% Growth





Thank you.

Alternative School's Modified Accountability System



Alternative School's Modified Accountability System





Option B:

- ◆ 20% Academic Persistence
- ◆ 20% Achievement
- ◆ 60% Growth





Thank you.

Alternative School's Modified Accountability System





Superintendent Search Process

May 15, 2023



NCSBA Superintendent Search Service

- NCSBA Superintendent Search Team
- 83 of 115 NC School Districts
- 198 Total Searches Completed or In Progress
- Members of National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS)



Getting Started

- Decide whether or not to conduct search
- Appoint interim superintendent, if needed
- Approve initial search documents, including timeline

Step
1



Advertise Vacancy and Recruit (6-8 weeks)

- Draft vacancy announcement with board input
- Set up online application with board input
- Advertise nationwide
- Recruit potential applicants
 - Direct recruitment (as requested)

Step
2



Stakeholder Input (4-6 weeks)

- Engage stakeholders to gather input
 - Community and staff online surveys
 - Organizational statements
 - Public comments at board meetings
- Present online survey results at regularly scheduled board meeting
- Facilitate discussion and development of board's Leadership Profile

**Step
3**



Process Applications (1-2 weeks)

- Collect, organize, and prepare all application materials
- Confirm receipt with applicants
- Compile applicant "Experience Chart"
- Create customized rating chart based on board's Leadership Profile
- Post materials to secure website for board review and consideration
- Preserve confidentiality of names and materials

**Step
4**



Board Review of Application Materials (2 weeks)

- Provide all applications and supplementary documents for board members to review independently
- Facilitate board meeting to select semi-finalists
 - *Note: NCSBA does not screen or otherwise recommend applicants*
- Conduct internet and social media searches and compile recent school district achievement data of semi-finalists selected for interviews

Step
5



Initial Interviews (2-3 weeks)

- Communicate with candidates selected for interviews
- Schedule and coordinate interview logistics
- Provide sample interview questions, including potential presentation questions
- Compile selected interview questions and assemble interview notebooks

Step
6



Initial Interviews (continued)

- Ensure compliance with Open Meetings Law, including proper meeting notice
- Attend open session during interviews
 - *Note: NCSBA does not sit in on closed session interviews*
- Record minutes
- Facilitate discussion to select finalists

Step
6



Due Diligence (3 weeks)

- Contact professional references
- Arrange for legally compliant criminal and credit background checks
- Obtain other relevant information from finalists (e.g., salary, contract, evaluations, etc.)
- Update internet and social media searches

Step
7



Final Interviews (1 week)

- Communicate with finalists
- Schedule and coordinate interview logistics
- Provide sample interview questions
- Compile selected interview questions and assemble interview notebooks

Step
8



Final Interviews (continued)

- Ensure compliance with federal and state law, including Open Meetings Law
- Attend open session during interviews
 - *Note: NCSBA does not sit in on closed session interviews*
- Record minutes
- Facilitate discussion of references and other due diligence information

Step
8



Selection and Contract Negotiations (1 week)

- Facilitate discussion of finalists and selection of new superintendent
- Send regrets to applicants, semi-finalists, and finalists not selected
- Provide sample superintendent contracts
- Assist board and board attorney during contract negotiations, as appropriate

**Step
9**



Announcement and Election

- Draft press release template
- Assist with planning announcement and election of new superintendent, as appropriate
- Compile minutes from all attended meetings

**Step
10**



Why NCSBA?

**Experience
Expertise
Excellence**



Experience

Current Searches in Progress

Lexington City Schools
Sampson County Schools
Wake County Public School System
Scotland County Schools
Hoke County Schools

Recently Completed Searches

Cabarrus County Schools
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
Chatham County Schools
Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools
Moore County Schools
New Hanover County Schools
Rockingham County Schools
Washington County Schools
Wayne County Public Schools
Weldon City Schools
Mooresville Graded School District
Tyrrell County Schools
Hertford County Public Schools
Richmond County Schools
Martin County Schools
Camden County Schools



Expertise

A number of consultants on our NCSBA superintendent search team are licensed NC attorneys who are experts on the legal requirements applicable to superintendent searches in our state. Though NCSBA attorneys cannot and will not provide legal advice in place of your board attorney, we can avoid violating the law on your behalf.

- Chapter 115C of the NC General Statutes
- Confidential Personnel Laws
- Open Meetings
- Public Records
- Employment Discrimination
- Federal Background Checking Laws
- Superintendent Contracts



Excellence

As your state school boards association, we are ultimately here to serve you.

We are passionate about fulfilling that mission. We will work diligently to provide the board with a professional, thorough, and effective process throughout the search.

We also will be here to support you, your board, and your new superintendent long after the search is completed.



Questions?



NCSBA Contact Information

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Assistant Legal Counsel for
Superintendent Searches

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